

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JO

SUBJECT: SENATOR JAVITS' MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER RIFAI

1. PRIME MINISTER RIFAI WELCOMED SENATOR JAVITS WITH PERSONAL SHOW OF FRIENDSHIP IN ONE HOUR DISCUSSION IN HIS HOME EVENING OF 20 APRIL. IN DISCUSSIONS, RIFAI EMPHASIZED NEED TO KEEP NEGOTIATIONS MOMENTUM GOING IN 1976. RIFAI CENTERED HIS REMARKS ON RENEWED GENEVA CONFERENCE, EMPHASIZING THAT ISRAEL SHOULD WELCOME PLO PARTICIPATION. IN HIS FAMILIAR ARGUMENT, RIFAI SAID CONSEQUENCE WOULD BE EITHER PLO ACCEPTANCE OF PRINCIPLE OF PEACE SETTLEMENT WITH STATE OF ISRAEL, BLATANT OBSTRUCTIONISM BY PLO AT GENEVA, OR, HE BELIEVED MORE LIKELY, BREAKUP OF PLO INTO INEFFECTIVENESS OVER ISSUE OF ATTENDANCE AT GENEVA. IN EITHER OF LATTER TWO CASES, EGYPT AND SYRIA WOULD BE OFF THE HOOK AND COULD ATTEND GENEVA CONFERENCE FREE TO DISCUSS ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO THEIR OWN INTERESTS WHILE PALESTINIANS SORT THEMSELVES OUT.

2. ON JORDAN-ISRAELI NEGOTIATIONS RIFAI RECALLED JORDAN'S PRE-RABAT OFFER TO NEGOTIATE ON BASIS OF INITIAL ISRAELI PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL FROM WHOLE WEST SIDE OF

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JORDAN VALLEY. REQUIREMENT NOW, HE SAID WOULD BE TO

NEGOTIATE ON BASIS OF FULL ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL "WITH MONOR BORDER ADJUSTMENTS" AND "SOME WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE ADJUSTMENTS OF JERUSALEM SITUATION". RIFAI STATED CLEARLY THAT IF ISRAEL IS PREPARED TO DO THAT , JORDAN PREPARED TO SCRAP RABAT COMMITMENTS RE PLO RESPONSIBILITY FOR WEST BANK QUESTIONS AND NEGOTIATE " IN FACE THE WHOLE ARAB NATION". (OBVIOUS HE DID NOT BELIEVE THERE WOULD BE UNIFIED ARAB OPPOSITION ON ANY ISRAELI ACCEPTANCE).

3. RESPONDING TO SENATOR JAVIT'S QUESTION ABOUT MEANING OF RECENT MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ON WEST BANK, RIFAI SAID THEY REPRESENTED NEITHER A VICTORY FOR PLO NOR DEFEAT FOR JORDAN, BUT A RISE OF NEW PALESTINE NATIONALIST LEADERSHIP ON WEST BANK TIED TO NEITHER. IMPORTANT QUESTION REGARDING THOSE ELECTIONS, HE CONTINUED, IS WHAT USE ISRAEL MAKES OF NEWLY ELECTED LEADERSHIP. HE SUSPECTED HE SAIDN THAT ISRAELI GOAL IS TO CREATE A GROUP OF THIRD FORCE PALESTINIANS WITH WHOM THEY MIGHT NEGOTIATE AN AUTONOMOUS OR SEMI-AUTONOMOUS STATUS FOR THE WEST BANK AND THEN TRY TO WRITE FINIS UNDER THE PALESTINE ISSUE. HOWEVER, "ARAB NATION" WOULD NOT ACCEPT ISRAELI POLICY OF ONLY PERMITTING WEST BANK LEADERSHIP EXERCISE POWER OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION WITHIN LOCALLY AUTONOMOUS REGIONS OF ISRAELI STATE.

4 RIFAI SAID HE BELIEVE SENATOR'S WELCOME RECEPTION IN DAMASCUS ("YOU ARE ALWAYS WELCOME IN AMMAN") WAS SYMBOLIC OF CHANGED ARAB ATTITUDE TOWARD MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM AND SOLUTIONS. ALL CONFRONTATION STATES HE SAID, NOW WANT TO PURSUE SERIOUSLY NETOTIATED SETTLEMENT, BELIEVE ONE IS POSSIBLE, AND RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF INVOLVING THOSE LIKE SENATOR JAVITS WITH ACCESS TO BOTH SIDES. RIFAI MADE USUAL COMMENTS ABOUT ISRAEL BEING RECOGNIZED BY ARABS WITHIN 1967 BOUNDARIES AND URGENCY OF MOVING TOWARD PEACE.

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5. ON UNDOF RENEWAL , RIFAI THOUGHT ASAD WOULD WELCOME A WAY TO RENEW, BUT NE NEEDED A POLITICAL TRADE OFF. HE MENTIONED JORDANIAN ENCOURAGEMENT OF SYRIAN FLEXIBILITY IN UNDOF MANDATE RENEWAL IN THE PAST AND THAT ASAD HAD MANUFACTURED AN ILLUSORY PROBLEM WITH IRAQ OVER THE EUPHRATES WATER ISSUE IN 1975 IN ORDER TO TRANSFER SYRIAN TROOPS TO THE EASTERN FRONT AS A WAY TO EXTEND UNDOF, AND THE UN SECURITY

COUNCIL DEBATE PLAY HAD WORKED IN NOVEMBER. RIFAI
BROUGHT UP AGAIN PROSPECT OF UNILATERAL ISRAELI
WITHDRAWAL FROM SYRIAN FRONT 3 OR 4 KILOMETERS INTO
WHICH UN FORCES WOULD MOVE, AS A STEP WHICH ASAD WOULD
HAVE TO ACCEPT AND ALSO AS A REASON FROM HIM TO AGREE
ON RENEWAL IN MAY.

6. COMMENT: NO BILATERAL ISSUES WERE DISCUSSED,
AND IT WAS OBVIOUS RIFAI WANTED TO GET ACROSS TO
SENATOR JAVITS ON EVE OF LATTER'S VISIT TO ISRAEL
IMPRESSION THAT NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT POSSIBLE WITH
ARAB STATES. ARABS CANNOT MOVE FAR FROM RETURN
TO 1967 BOUNDARIES POSITION BUT OTHERWISE
HAVE COME LONG WAY IN PERCEPTION OF MIDDLE EAST
MAP AND SETTLEMENT PROCEDURES WITHIN PAST FEW YEARS.

7. TEL AVIV: PLEASE PASS SENATOR JAVITS.
PICKERING

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